

Red River Hiking Trails



Short Hikes:

Mallette Park Nature Trail (EASY) - 1/4 mile

To access this trail, turn onto Mallette Road at Sitzmark Sports and continue until you reach Mallette Park on the left. The Trail begins just to the left of the tennis court/skate park. Follow the stream until you reach the dirt road.

Red River Nature Trail (EASY-MODERATE) - 2.5 miles

There are 3 points in town available to access this trail:

- Cross the Red River on the covered bridge behind the conference center.
- Catch the trail to the left of the platinum chairlift.
- Cross the Red River on the bridge located across from the Red River Public Library.

This trail runs along the river at the base of the mountain and is a great hike for kids. There are signs posted along the trail explaining history, animals, plants and geology of the area.

Middle Fork Lake Trail FR 487 (DIFFICULT) - 2 miles one way - Elevation 9,650 feet to 10,840 feet

To reach the trailhead, travel on Hwy 578 to the end of the pavement (6 miles). Take the road to the right, Forest Road 58, for about 1 mile to the parking area. From the parking area walk on the road for 1/4 mile to a small bridge crossing on the left which is the actual trailhead. The trail climbs upwards through the forest to waterfalls where the creek must be crossed. The trail then follows a series of switchbacks on to the lake which sits at 10,845 feet.

Pioneer Creek Trail FR 485 (INTERMEDIATE) - 3.4 miles one way - Elevation 8,300 feet to 10,200 feet

The trailhead can be accessed off of Pioneer Road and is adjacent to the Arrowhead Lodge. Parking is available in the ski area parking lot. The trail, which follows a road built by miners at the end of the 19th century, is easy to follow. Along the trail you will see remnants of gold, silver and copper mines that operated through the 1920's. The trail climbs to an elevation of 10,200 feet where it meets private land.

East Fork Sawmill Park Trail 55 (EASY-MODERATE) - 3.6 miles one way - Elevation 9,600 feet to 10,950 feet

To access the trailhead, travel 6 miles on Hwy 578 to the end of the pavement. At the end of the pavement cross over the bridge to the left. From here it is 1.3 miles to the trailhead where parking is available. Follow this road through a residential area and then turn right on the unpaved road (FR 58A) to the parking area. The trail follows an old wagon road through the woods and at approximately one mile in the trail crosses the Big Ditch. The Big Ditch project of 1868 was a 40 mile long water diversion ditch built by 400 men. Follow the trail several hundred feet along the Big Ditch and in 1/2 mile the trail to Sawmill Park heads off to the left. The trail runs along the side of the ridge and after one mile turns into Sawmill Canyon. Sawmill Park, a very large open meadow which extends to the southeast with Sawmill Creek running through, is an excellent spot for a picnic.

Summit Trail (EASY-MODERATE) - 4 miles one way—Elevation 8,750 feet to 10,350 feet.

To access the trailhead of the newest hiking trail in the area, head to the base of the Platinum Chairlift located behind the Lift House at the intersection of Pioneer Rd and River St. The trailhead starts to the right of the chairlift. The trail climbs upwards through the forest to the top of the ski mountain

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Long Hikes:

Lost Lake Trail 91 (DIFFICULT) - 5 miles one way - Elevation 9,650 feet to 11,495 feet

To reach the trailhead, travel on Hwy 578 to the end of the pavement (6 miles). Take the road to the right, Forest Road 58, for about 1 mile to the parking area. From the parking area walk on the road for 1/4 mile to a small bridge crossing on the left which is the actual trailhead to Middle Fork Lake. Follow the Middle Fork Lake Trail for one mile to some falls and a river crossing where the trail to Lost Lake splits off to the left and is marked by a sign. From this point it is 4 miles further to Lost Lake. After about two miles the trail leaves the forest and crosses a saddle on the ridge, then continues through some meadows and across rock outcroppings along the edge of the East Fork Canyon. Lost Lake is a high glacier lake that sits at an elevation of 11,495 feet.

Columbine Trail 71 (MODERATE-DIFFICULT) - 5.3 miles one way to ridge top - Elevation 7,900 feet to 11,200 feet

The trailhead is located at the Columbine Campground eight miles west of Red River. At the back of the campground there is a parking area for the trail. The trail follows a route used by miners and prospectors during the mining boom of the late 1800's. From the trailhead the path climbs gradually through the forest for 1/2 mile and then descends to join the Columbine Creek and crosses the first of four foot bridges. From the bridge, the trail continues along Columbine Creek and gets steeper. After four miles in, the trail crosses an 11,200-foot divide and climbs to a ridge where it joins a network of trails including Trail 69 Deer Creek Trail, Trail 64 to Gold Hill (9 miles), Trail 57 to Lobo Peak (10 miles) and Trail 90 to Twining (13 miles). This network of trails makes up the Columbine Twining National Recreation Trail.

Goose Creek Trail 65 (DIFFICULT) - 5.5 miles one way - Elevation 8,800 feet to 11,630 feet

To reach the trailhead, travel on Hwy 578 approximately two miles until you see Aspen Park on your right. Park here and cross the Red River on the bridge. The trail heads to the left along the river. The trail crosses the creek twice and then follows the right side of the canyon. At about one mile the trail climbs the ridge and enters a small meadow. The trail then travels a short distance through the forest to a larger meadow and climbs along the ridge of the canyon to an aspen grove. At almost two miles in a third larger meadow is reached. Once you are three and 1/2 miles in you will see an old wagon road that enters on the right. After another 1/4 mile the trail crosses the creek and continues on the left side. From here it is approximately 3 miles to the lake which sits at 11,630 feet below the ridge of Gold Hill.

Horseshoe Lake Trail 56 (DIFFICULT) - 7 miles one way - Elevation 9,650 feet to 11,950 feet

Follow the directions to Lost Lake Trail 91. Horseshoe Lake is approximately two miles past Lost Lake. The trail to Horseshoe Lake begins on the south side of the Lost Lake dam and heads southeast. The trail follows the rim of the canyon for about one mile on fairly level terrain. At one mile in you will see the intersection of the East Fork trail. Soon after this junction, the trail climbs a series of steep switchbacks. At one and 3/4 miles the trail leaves the timberline and climbs a steep ridge to Horseshoe Lake which sits at 11,950 feet.

Wheeler Peak Trail (VERY DIFFICULT) - 7 to 10 miles one way - Elevation 9,650 feet to 13,161 feet

The shortest route to Wheeler Peak is from Middle Fork Lake. Follow the directions to Middle Fork Lake and there are two options from there to Wheeler Peak. The first is to cross the dam and find Middle Fork Creek to follow. There is no designated trail here and the path is rough for one mile. Near the origin of the creek as you leave the trees, turn left and there is a clear trail to Wheeler Peak which is the highest point in New Mexico at an elevation of 13,161 feet. The other option from Middle Fork Lake is to follow the trail that goes up to the right above the lake towards the saddle. Cross the saddle and climb up the ridge to the left. At the top of the ridge the remainder of the trail is easy to follow.

The second major route to Wheeler Peak is via the trail to Lost and Horseshoe Lakes. This is the longest route, about 10 miles. Follow the trail to Lost Lake and then on to Horseshoe Lake. From Horseshoe Lake, the trail goes over the dam and climbs the ridge. The climb out of Horseshoe Lake is steep but after reaching the ridge the remaining three miles to Wheeler Peak is a fairly easy trail.